



Global Maritime Security

An overview of the National Strategy for Maritime Security.

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On December 21, 2004, President George W. Bush signed Maritime Security Policy National Security Presidential Directive 41/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 13 (NSPD-41/HSPD-13) with the goal of establishing U.S. policy, guidelines, and implementation actions to enhance homeland security by protecting U.S. maritime interests. It directs that all U.S. government maritime security programs and initiatives be coordinated to achieve a comprehensive and cohesive national effort involving appropriate federal, state, local, and private sector entities.

The Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security were jointly charged with leading a collaborative interagency effort to craft a National Strategy for Maritime Security (NSMS) and eight supporting plans.

To successfully achieve their objectives, the National Strategy for Maritime Security and supporting plans must consider the following statements:

- The safety and economic security of the United States depend in substantial part upon the secure use of the world's oceans. Maritime security harmonizes the need for protection against terrorist, hostile, criminal, and dangerous acts with the need for vibrant, secure maritime commerce that underpins economic security. Therefore, the United States has a vital national interest in maritime security.
- The security of the Maritime Domain is a global issue. Since all nations benefit from this collective security, all nations must share

in the responsibility for maintaining maritime security.

- Security in the Maritime Domain is a shared responsibility between the public and the private sectors.
- Maritime security encompasses threats from all criminal or hostile acts, such as the smuggling of contraband, illegal immigration, piracy, illegal harvesting of natural resources, and terrorist activities.

The National Strategy for Maritime Security strives for a holistic approach in dealing with the broad array of threats to security within the maritime domain, addressing activities that span from prevention to post-incident recovery. The NSMS strives to achieve its objectives through five cross-cutting strategic actions:

- **Enhancing international cooperation to ensure lawful and timely actions against maritime threats.** New initiatives are needed to ensure that all nations fulfill their responsibilities to prevent and respond to terrorist or criminal actions with timely and effective enforcement. The United States will continue to promote the development of cooperative mechanisms for coordinating regional measures against maritime threats that span national boundaries and jurisdictions. The United States will also work closely with other governments and international and regional organizations to enhance the maritime security capabilities of other key nations.

- **Maximizing Domain Awareness to support effective decision making.** A key national security requirement is gaining an effective understanding of all activities, events, and trends within the Maritime Domain that could threaten the safety, security, economy, or environment of the United States and its people. Domain awareness enables the early identification of potential threats and enhances appropriate responses, including interdiction at an optimal distance with capable prevention forces.
- **Embedding security into commercial practices to reduce vulnerabilities.** Private owners and operators of infrastructure, facilities, and resources are their own first line of defense and should embed into their business practices scalable security measures that reduce systemic or physical vulnerabilities. Embedding security practices rests upon the implementation and continual improvement of key legislation, such as the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002, and International Maritime Organization requirements, such as the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code.
- **Deploying layered security to unify public and private security measures.** Achieving maritime security is contingent upon executing a layered security system that integrates the capabilities of governments and commercial interests. The public and private sectors, acting in concert, can only prevent terrorist attacks and criminal acts by using diverse and complementary measures, rather than relying upon a single solution.
- **Assuring continuity of the marine transportation system to maintain vital commerce.** The United States must be prepared to maintain vital commerce in the aftermath of any terrorist attack or other similarly disruptive incidents that occur within the Maritime Domain. The response to such events should not default to an automatic shutdown of the marine transportation system; instead, the United States will be prepared to disengage selectively only designated portions and immediately implement contingency measures to ensure the public's safety and continuity of commerce.

The National Strategy for Maritime Security focuses on four main objectives:

- preventing successful terrorist attacks and criminal or hostile acts;
- protecting maritime-related population centers and critical infrastructure;
- minimizing damage and expediting recovery; and
- safeguarding the ocean and its resources.

The National Strategy for Maritime Security is further guided by the following principles:

- freedom of the seas must be preserved for legitimate military and commercial navigation;
- maritime security efforts should seek to facilitate global commerce and prosperity; and
- individual civil liberties and rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, as well as the international rule of law, must be preserved.

The eight supporting plans of the National Strategy for Maritime Security cover the areas of:

- National Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA);
- Global Maritime Intelligence Integration;
- Domestic Outreach Engagement;
- Coordination of International Efforts and International Outreach;
- National Maritime Operational Threat Response;
- National Maritime Infrastructure Recovery;
- Maritime Transportation System Security; and
- Maritime Commerce Security.

Coast Guard's Role in Implementing National Strategy

NSPD-41/HSPD-13 created an interagency Maritime Security Policy Coordinating Committee (MSPCC) to serve as the primary forum for coordinating U.S. government maritime security policies. The MSPCC coordinated the development of the National Strategy for Maritime Security and its supporting plans and is now actively working on assigning responsibilities and tasks to agencies within the government for implementation. The Coast Guard, as a lead federal agency responsible for maritime homeland security, will take an active role in executing the National Strategy for Maritime Security and its eight supporting plans.

While an implementation strategy for the NSMS and its supporting plans is currently being developed, the Coast Guard should expect to play an active leadership role in several areas.

Integrating the Layers of Security

The concept of layers of security is complex and involves multiple types of activities to create a network of interdependent, overlapping, and purposely redundant checkpoints in the system, which are designed to reduce vulnerabilities and detect, deter, and defeat threats. It entails developing security measures that cover the various components of the maritime transportation system, including people, infrastructure, conveyances, and information systems. These security measures span distances geographically from foreign ports of embarkation, through transit zones, to U.S. ports of entry and beyond; involve the different modes of transportation that feed the global supply chain; and are implemented by various commercial, regulatory, law enforcement, intelligence, diplomatic, and military entities.

A significant challenge to constructing integrated layers of security is the fact that many of the layers are the responsibility of different agencies. Integrating these disparate maritime security layers will be nearly impossible to achieve through ad hoc cooperation. The solution to this dilemma involves unity of effort, shared responsibility, partnership, and mutual support, but requires an agency with significant maritime security responsibilities to step up and act as a coordinator for the purposes of integrating the government's efforts to provide layered security. This will be an important function, as coordinating the layers of security requires working with agencies, private sector interests, and international partners to integrate

efforts and eliminate seams between different modes of transport, agency jurisdictions, and international boundaries, so as to deny their exploitation by criminal or hostile actors.

Coordinating Maritime Security Operations

Deploying a system of effective, layered security requires extensive operational coordination and unity of effort among the involved agencies and the private sector. Mission coordination is essential to integrate the maritime security operations of numerous agencies at the operational and tactical levels to achieve operational effectiveness. A need exists to identify an agency with organizational capacities to champion the development of coordination protocols for operating jointly to prevent and respond to threats, such as those contained within the national Maritime Operational Threat Response Plan. This agency would also facilitate command and control during specific incidents and provide a forum for interagency mission planning when a multi-agency response must be seamlessly coordinated.

The Coast Guard possesses the authorities, capabilities, competencies, and partnerships to fulfill this role and should expect to be called upon to act as a mission coordinator. The Coast Guard maintains a robust command, control, and communications (C3) network of local, regional, area, and national level, military-style command and control centers, supported by extensive communications systems. To meet the expanding requirements of the maritime security mission, the Coast Guard is transforming its C3 network into integrated, multifunction command centers and is also enhancing the capabilities of the supporting communications systems. The Coast Guard must prepare to leverage its C3 network capabilities to support integrated maritime security operations.

Preparing for Maritime Recovery Operations

The private sector has traditionally demonstrated an ability to adjust activities in response to disruptions in the maritime transportation system, so much so that it has often been said to be self-healing in nature. Widespread disruptions, however, caused by a security-related incident of national significance, could threaten to bring large portions of the maritime transportation system to a virtual standstill, and contingencies must be prepared.

Assuring continuity of commerce is likely to require extensive coordination between the public and private sectors to restart or keep the flow of commerce moving during such an event. The National Strategy for Maritime Security identifies the Coast Guard as

the executive agent for the Department of Homeland Security for coordinating mitigation measures to expedite the recovery of infrastructure and transportation systems in the Maritime Domain. As such, the U.S. Coast Guard should expect to play a leadership role in coordinating maritime recovery operations in consultation with federal, state, and local agency partners and the private sector.

On the national level, recovery policies and procedures that emphasize assuring continuity of commerce in the Maritime Domain, such as the Maritime Infrastructure Recovery Plan and the Plan to Re-establish Cargo Flow, as contained within the National Maritime Transportation Security Plan, must be developed and closely coordinated with the

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other federal agencies and the private sector. Within the ports, the Coast Guard Captain of the Ports, as Federal Maritime Security Coordinators, can anticipate that they will be required to coordinate with federal, state, local, and private sector stakeholders through the Area Maritime Security Committees to prepare contingency plans for conducting maritime recovery operations.

Partnering for International Maritime Diplomacy

The Coast Guard, now more than ever, should expect to play a vital role as an instrument of national security in protecting, promoting, and defending the maritime interests of the United States and our international partners. It is a unique agency through

which the United States can assist other nations in achieving maritime security throughout the domain. The Coast Guard is ideally suited to conduct international maritime diplomacy activities on behalf of the Department of State and the Combatant Commanders, as well as on its own behalf, to achieve the objectives of the NSMS.

In its international maritime diplomacy role, the Coast Guard can assist other nations in the:

- development of national maritime policies, strategies, standards, and legislation;
- professional and material development of national maritime security, maritime safety, and naval forces; and
- development of other maritime management and regulatory agencies.

The Coast Guard has traditionally been the chief advocate for the United States in international issues involving maritime safety. Similarly, the Coast Guard should expect to be called upon to be the driving force in moving maritime security issues to the forefront at international forums such as the International Maritime Organization.

Conclusion

As stated in the National Strategy for Maritime Security, it is only through an integrated approach among all maritime partners—domestic and international, public and private—that the security of the Maritime Domain can successfully be improved. Such collaboration is fundamental to implementing this national strategy and is vital to protecting the interests of the United States.

About the author: CDR John Caplis currently works in the Office of Strategic Analysis for the Coast Guard Chief of Staff. He was detailed to the HSPD-13 project team as the Deputy Action Officer for the Department of Homeland Security, where he was a member of the core writing team that drafted the National Strategy for Maritime Security and coordinated with the interagency working groups that developed the eight supporting plans.